

REMARKS

The Examiner's action dated December 19, 2002, has been received, and its contents carefully noted.

In order to resolve the problem relating to claim renumbering and the rejection of claims 10-17 under 35 USC 112, claims 1-17 have been cancelled and replaced by new claims 18-33, drafted to more clearly define the contribution of the invention over the prior art. Since all of the claims now constitute, when considered together with the implied words "I claim", complete sentences, it is submitted that these claims fully comply with the requirements of 35 USC 112, second paragraph and it is therefore requested that the rejection of the claims on that ground be reconsidered and withdrawn.

The previous rejection of original claims 1-3 and 6-17 as unpatentable over Rypinski and Dean is respectfully traversed for reason that the novel network and node now defined in the pending claims is not disclosed in suggested by any combination of the teachings of the applied references.

The present invention, as defined in claim 18, is directed to a communication network composed of a plurality of nodes interconnected by a plurality of communication links. According to the invention, the network has at least one distinct state in which one of the nodes is in a repeating mode in which it repeats data received via one communication link to all other communication links.

The term "repeats", as employed herein, and as disclosed in the present application, relates to an active operation in which data is conducted through drivers from one communication link to another. Specification, page 9, line 23

to page 10, line 3. This feature is defined in the last clause of claim 18.

In contrast, Rypinski discloses a network containing adaptors that are simply switchable to connect conductors between two communication links. The Dean reference discloses a network of a plurality of nodes, each node having a circuit 128 composed of a band pass filter and a switch that can establish a passive conductive path between two communication links.

Thus, neither of these references discloses a network containing a node that is constructed to **repeat** data from one communication link to other communication links.

Claim 18, and particularly the last clause thereof, clearly distinguishes patentably over any of the combination of the teaching of the teaching of the applied references.

Claim 28 distinguishes even more clearly over the applied references by its recitation of a controlled repeater that is controllable to repeat data in a selected direction between two communication links. The conductors disclosed in the applied references, which are not repeaters, will conduct data arbitrarily in both directions.

Claim 29 is directed to the node according to the present invention and specifies that the node is mode switchable under control of the unit into either one of two states, each state allowing data to be repeated only in a respective one of two directions. Such structure is clearly not disclosed in either of the applied references, or in the references relied upon to support the rejection of original claims 4 and 5.

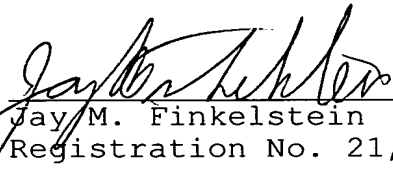
Accordingly, it is requested that the rejections of record be reconsidered and withdrawn, that claims 18-33 be allowed and that the application be found in allowable condition.

In re of Appln. No. 09/349,020

If the above amendment should not now place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to call undersigned counsel to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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